



THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

NEWS

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CONTACT: Julie Limpach
(216) 707-2261

jlimpach@ClevelandArt.org

Leipzig Academy Artists Celebrated at the Cleveland Museum of Art *New School of German Painters Showcased*

CLEVELAND (Dec. 2, 2004) — The Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) presents seven new large-scale paintings by a group of young painters who either taught or studied at the Leipzig Academy of Visual Arts in Germany in the 1990s. This new Project 244 exhibition **From Leipzig**, will be on view Jan. 30 to May 1, 2005.

Admission to this exhibition and the Museum is free.

Curator of the exhibiton Jeffrey D. Grove said “With the huge international interest in the these artists, we are pleased to feature them in Cleveland through Project 244. Collectively they represent a new generation of German painters who will undoubtedly be recognized as among the most significant artists of the time.”

The artists in this exhibition include Tilo Baumgärtel (German, b. 1972), Tim Eitel (German, b. 1971), Martin Kobe (German, B. 1973), Christophe Ruckhäberle (German, b. 1972), David Schnell (German, b. 1971), Matthias Weischer (Germany, b. 1973) and at 44, the elder statesman of the group, Neo Rauch (German, b. 1960).

Among German art academies, Leipzig Academy is the oldest, founded in 1764; it holds a prominent status among painters with its first figurative painting course in 1961. The first two years of structured academic program at the Leipzig Academy is emphasized by portrait and nude studies. When Germany was divided after World War II, West German art schools rejected figurative painting as a result of the Third Reich’s use of art as propaganda, while East Germany continued the use of political art. Artists of the Leipzig Academy were known for historical paintings with little socialist realistic imagery, focusing on expressionist style.

After Germany’s reunification in 1990, the Leipzig Academy continued with traditional painting techniques. Students who attended were from East and West Germany and became the first generation to grow up in the reunified Germany. Recalling the rise of the “Neo-Geo” and “New-Image” movements in the 1980s and the YBA’s (or Young British Artists) in the 1990s, the phenomenal evolution of the so-called “Leipzig School” is a cultural and artistic watershed that has made a profound impression on contemporary art scene.

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These varied artists paint similar subjects such as landscapes, urban views and interiors with or without figures that appear to be strange or surreal. These young painters are not only compelling for their highly idiosyncratic and gripping images but they also share a unique identity as a quasi-artists' collective. A number of them organized their first group exhibition outside the Leipzig Academy in December 2000 and quickly, each found gallery representation. Importantly, in March 2002 they established their own gallery, Galerie Liga in Berlin, for group shows, solo exhibitions and to establish contacts with museums, galleries, and collectors. Even though Liga closed in April 2004, it brought the group onto a scene saturated by photography, film and video, ready for paintings. The artists soon made their way into major international private and museum collections.

All of the works in this exhibition are drawn from the Ovitz Family Collection, Los Angeles, Calif., which represents one of the most significant group of Leipzig painters in the United States.

Free Public Lectures

Sat., April 2, 2 p.m.

Curator's Talk

Andrea Feldman Falcione, curator of the Ovitz Family Collection, discusses the young, new artists in **From Leipzig**. Meet in the Project 244 gallery.

Sat., March 5, 2 p.m.

Critic's Talk

Saul Ostrow, internationally recognized art critic and dean of Visual Arts and Technologies Environment at the Cleveland Institute of Art, discusses The Leipzig School. Meet in the Project 244 gallery.

Free Gallery Talks

Sun., Feb. 27, 1:30 p.m.; Wed., March 23, 1:30 p.m.; Sun., April 3, 1:30 p.m. and Thurs., May. 12, 1:30 p.m.

CMA educator Karen Levinsky will give a gallery talk in the exhibition. Meet near the North Lobby Information Desk.

Free Family Express Workshop

Sun., April 17, 2 to 4:30 p.m.

Birds of a Feather

Create surrealist works based on images from the Project 244 exhibition **From Leipzig** and our own permanent collection. Meet in the Interior Garden Court.

Promotional support of Project 244 is provided by *Angle Magazine*. The Cleveland Museum of Art receives operating support from the Ohio Arts.

The Cleveland Museum of Art is one of America's leading comprehensive Museums. Its permanent collection is world renowned for its quality and breadth, spanning 6,000 years. The Museum is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship and art acquisitions. For more information on the Museum, its holdings, programs, services and events, call 1-888-CMA-0033 or visit www.ClevelandArt.org.

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